

Appl. No.: 10/722,380
Amdt. dated 06/06/2005
Reply to Office action of January 5, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

1-7 (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein the ~~luminescent~~ colorant is a fluorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 0.05 percent by weight to about 2.5 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

9. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein the ~~luminescent~~ colorant is a fluorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 0.1 percent by weight to about 1 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein said first and second polymeric components are each independently selected from the group consisting of polyolefins, polyesters, polyamides, polyacrylates, polystyrenes, polyurethanes, acetal resins, polyethylene vinyl alcohol, thermoplastic elastomers, polyacrylonitrile, polyaramids, cellulose and cellulose derivatives, and blends and co- and terpolymers thereof.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprise the same polymer.

13. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyamide polymer.

14. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 13, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyamide polymer selected from the group consisting of nylon 6 and nylon 6,6.

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15. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises an aromatic polyester polymer.

16. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 15, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polyethylene terephthalate.

17. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises an aliphatic polyester polymer.

18. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 17, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polylactic acid.

19. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 12, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises a polyolefin polymer.

20. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim 19, wherein both of said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component comprises polypropylene.

21 (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 31, wherein said ~~the colorant is a~~ phosphorescent colorant ~~[[is]]~~ selected from the group consisting of metal aluminate oxide, sulfides of zinc, calcium, strontium and cadmium, and complex sulfides of zinc and cadmium sulfide.

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23. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[21]]~~ 22, wherein said phosphorescent colorant is metal aluminate oxide, zinc sulfide or strontium sulfide.

24. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein said second polymeric component comprises a fluorescent colorant.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[25]]~~ 31, wherein the core is concentrically located within the sheath.

27. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[25]]~~ 31, wherein the core is eccentrically located within the sheath.

28-29 (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) The ~~multicomponent~~ bicomponent fiber of Claim ~~[[1]]~~ 31, wherein said fiber is selected from the group consisting of continuous filaments, staple fibers, spunbond fibers, and meltblown fibers.

31. (Currently Amended) A sheath and core bicomponent fiber, comprising:
a sheath comprising a non-luminescent first polymeric component; and
a core comprising a second polymeric component, the second polymer component comprising at least one fluorescent or phosphorescent colorant;
wherein the core comprises less than about ~~[[35]]~~20 percent of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber.

32. (Original) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a phosphorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 1 percent by weight to about 15 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

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33. (Original) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the colorant is a phosphorescent colorant and is present in an amount of about 5 percent by weight to about 15 percent by weight based on the total weight of the fiber.

34. (Original) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein said first polymeric component and said second polymeric component are formed from the same polymer selected from the group consisting of nylon 6, nylon 6,6, polyethylene terephthalate, polylactic acid, and polypropylene.

35 – 38 (Cancelled)

39. (New) A fabric comprising a plurality of bicomponent fibers according to Claim 31.

40. (New) The fabric of Claim 39, wherein the fabric is selected from the group consisting of woven fabrics, knit fabrics, and nonwoven fabrics.

41. (New) An outdoor apparel or safety equipment article comprising a plurality of bicomponent fibers according to Claim 31.

42. (New) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the sheath is multilobal.

43. (New) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core comprises less than about 15% of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber.

44. (New) The bicomponent fiber of Claim 31, wherein the core comprises about 10% to about 20% of the cross-sectional area of the bicomponent fiber.